Math Item Specifications

HIGH SCHOOL (NUMBER AND QUANTITY)

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Item Development Process	2
Test Construction Guidelines	4
Math Practices	4
Blueprint	8
Depth of Knowledge (DOK)	8
Calculators	9
Item Formats	10
Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (AzCCRS)	13
High School Math Item Specifications (Geometry)	14
The Complex Number System	14
Quantities	17
The Real Number System	20

Introduction

The Arizona Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics (AzMERIT) is Arizona's statewide achievement test. AzMERIT assesses the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (AzCCRS) adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education in 2010. AzMERIT will inform students, teachers, and parents about preparedness for college and careers upon graduating from high school. AzMERIT tests are computer-based, meaning that they can better assess students' critical thinking skills and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the materials. Computer-based testing also allows for the use of a variety of innovative items types.

During the item-development process, all AzMERIT items are written in accordance with the Item Specifications and are reviewed and approved by a committee of Arizona educators to confirm alignment and appropriateness for inclusion in the test. AzMERIT items are generally representative of Arizona's geographic regions and culturally diverse population. Items are reviewed for the following kinds of bias: gender, racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographic, and socioeconomic. Item reviews also include consideration of issues related to individuals with disabilities. Arizona community members also have an opportunity to review items for issues of potential concern to members of the community at large. Reviewers are asked to consider the variety of cultural, regional, philosophical, political, and religious backgrounds throughout Arizona, and then to determine whether the subject matter will be acceptable to Arizona students, families, and other members of Arizona communities.

This AzMERIT Item Specifications is a resource document that defines the content and format of the test and test items for item writers and reviewers. Each Item Specifications document indicates the alignment of items with the AzCCRS. It also serves to provide all stakeholders with information about the scope and function of assessment items. This document can also serve to assist educators to understand how assessment items are developed in alignment with the standards for English language arts and math. These item specifications for AzMERIT are intended to provide information regarding standards, item formats and response types. The descriptions of math practices, blueprints, and depth of knowledge in this document are meant to provide an overview of the test. Item specifications are meant for the purposes of assessment, not instruction. They are not intended to be tools for instruction or the basis for curricula. AzMERIT has a test blueprint that was developed by Arizona and is different from any other state or consortium test blueprint.

For the math portion of AzMERIT, all of the test questions are aligned to the mathematic content standards for these subject areas. Similarly, each item assesses a single domain and aligns to one or more of the eight Math Practices. Any item specifications that are absent for standards listed in this document may be under development. This document does not endorse the exclusion of the instruction of any grade-level content standards. The test will ask questions that check a student's conceptual understanding of math as well as their procedural skills. These items have been written to be free from bias and sensitivity, and widely vary in their degree of difficulty.

Item Development Process

AzMERIT items go through a rigorous review before they are operational. When an item is "operational" it means it is used to determine a student's score on the assessment. This is a description of the process every item must go through before it is operational on AzMERIT.



Sample tests are available online for the math portion of AzMERIT. For more information view the Guide to the Sample Tests at http://azmeritportal.org/.

Test Construction Guidelines

The construction of the AzMERIT assessment is guided by the depth and rigor of the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. Items are created to address key components of the standards and assess a range of important skills. The AzMERIT Blueprint provides an overview of the distribution of items on the AzMERIT according to the standards. The standards for Math Practices are embedded within all AzMERIT items. Further, the AzMERIT blueprint outlines the Depth of Knowledge distribution of items.

Math Practices

The standards for Mathematical Practice highlight the knowledge, skills and abilities that should be developed in students at all grades. The Mathematical Practices are a part of each course description for Grades 3 through 8, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra 2. These practices are a vital part of the curriculum. These skills are often difficult to measure, and as a result, every item created for AzMERIT aligns to one or more of the following eight Mathematical Practices.

Math Practice (MP)	Description
Math Practice 1	Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Mathematically proficient students start by explaining to themselves the meaning of a problem and looking for entry points to its solution. They analyze givens, constraints, relationships, and goals. They make conjectures about the form and meaning of the solution and plan a solution pathway rather than simply jumping into a solution attempt. They consider analogous problems, and try special cases and simpler forms of the original problem in order to gain insight into its solution. They monitor and evaluate their progress and change course if necessary. Older students might, depending on the context of the problem, transform algebraic expressions or change the viewing window on their graphing calculator to get the information they need. Mathematically proficient students can explain correspondences between equations, verbal descriptions, tables, and graphs or draw diagrams of important features and relationships, graph data, and search for regularity or trends. Younger students might rely on using concrete objects or pictures to help conceptualize and solve a problem. Mathematically proficient students check their answers to problems using a different method, and they continually ask themselves, "Does this make sense?" They can understand the approaches of others to solving complex problems and identify correspondences between different approaches.

Math Practice (MP)	Description
Math Practice 2	Reason abstractly and quantitatively. Mathematically proficient students make sense of quantities and their relationships in problem situations. They bring two complementary abilities to bear on problems involving quantitative relationships: the ability to decontextualize—to abstract a given situation and represent it symbolically and manipulate the representing symbols as if they have a life of their own, without necessarily attending to their referents—and the ability to contextualize, to pause as needed during the manipulation process in order to probe into the referents for the symbols involved. Quantitative reasoning entails habits of creating a coherent representation of the problem at hand; considering the units involved; attending to the meaning of quantities, not just how to compute them; and knowing and flexibly using different properties of operations and objects.
Math Practice 3	Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. Mathematically proficient students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments. They make conjectures and build a logical progression of statements to explore the truth of their conjectures. They are able to analyze situations by breaking them into cases, and can recognize and use counterexamples. They justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others. They reason inductively about data, making plausible arguments that take into account the context from which the data arose. Mathematically proficient students are also able to compare the effectiveness of two plausible arguments, distinguish correct logic or reasoning from that which is flawed, and—if there is a flaw in an argument—explain what it is. Elementary students can construct arguments using concrete referents such as objects, drawings, diagrams, and actions. Such arguments can make sense and be correct, even though they are not generalized or made formal until later grades. Later, students learn to determine domains to which an argument applies. Students at all grades can listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments.

Math Practice (MP)	Description	
Math Practice 4	Model with mathematics. Mathematically proficient students can apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace. In early grades, this might be as simple as writing an addition equation to describe a situation. In middle grades, a student might apply proportional reasoning to plan a school event or analyze a problem in the community. By high school, a student might use geometry to solve a design problem or use a function to describe how one quantity of interest depends on another. Mathematically proficient students who can apply what they know are comfortable making assumptions and approximations to simplify a complicated situation, realizing that these may need revision later. They are able to identify important quantities in a practical situation and map their relationships using such tools as diagrams, two-way tables, graphs, flowcharts and formulas. They can analyze those relationships mathematically to draw conclusions. They routinely interpret their mathematical results in the context of the situation and reflect on whether the results make sense, possibly improving the model if it has not served its purpose.	
Math Practice 5	Use appropriate tools strategically. Mathematically proficient students consider the available tools when solving a mathematical problem. These tools might include pencil and paper, concrete models, a ruler, a protractor, a calculator, a spreadsheet, a computer algebra system, a statistical package, or dynamic geometry software. Proficient students are sufficiently familiar with tools appropriate for their grade or course to make sound decisions about when each of these tools might be helpful, recognizing both the insight to be gained and their limitations. For example, mathematically proficient high school students analyze graphs of functions and solutions generated using a graphing calculator. They detect possible errors by strategically using estimation and other mathematical knowledge. When making mathematical models, they know that technology can enable them to visualize the results of varying assumptions, explore consequences, and compare predictions with data. Mathematically proficient students at various grade levels are able to identify relevant external mathematical resources, such as digital content located on a website, and use them to pose or solve problems. They are able to use technological tools to explore and deepen their understanding of concepts.	

Math Practice (MP)	Description	
Math Practice 6	Attend to precision. Mathematically proficient students try to communicate precisely to others. They try to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning. They state the meaning of the symbols they choose, including using the equal sign consistently and appropriately. They are careful about specifying units of measure, and labeling axes to clarify the correspondence with quantities in a problem. They calculate accurately and efficiently, express numerical answers with a degree of precision appropriate for the problem context. In the elementary grades, students give carefully formulated explanations to each other. By the time they reach high school they have learned to examine claims and make explicit use of definitions.	
Math Practice 7	Look for and make use of structure. Mathematically proficient students look closely to discern a pattern or structure. Young students, for example, might notice that three and seven more is the same amount as seven and three more, or they may sort a collection of shapes according to how many sides the shapes have. Later, students will see 7×8 equals the well-remembered $7 \times 5 + 7 \times 3$, in preparation for learning about the distributive property. In the expression $x^2 + 9x + 14$, older students can see the 14 as 2×7 and the 9 as $2 + 7$. They recognize the significance of an existing line in a geometric figure and can use the strategy of drawing an auxiliary line for solving problems. They also can step back for an overview and shift perspective. They can see complicated things, such as some algebraic expressions, as single objects or as being composed of several objects. For example, they can see $5 - 3(x - y)^2$ as 5 minus a positive number times a square and use that to realize that its value cannot be more than 5 for any real numbers x and y .	
Math Practice 8	Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Mathematically proficient students notice if calculations are repeated, and look both for general methods and for shortcuts. Upper elementary students might notice when dividing 25 by 11 that they are repeating the same calculations over and over again, and conclude they have a repeating decimal. By paying attention to the calculation of slope as they repeatedly check whether points are on the line through (1, 2) with slope 3, middle school students might abstract the equation $(y-2)/(x-1)=3$. Noticing the regularity in the way terms cancel when expanding $(x-1)(x+1)$, $(x-1)(x^2+x+1)$, and $(x-1)(x^3+x^2+x+1)$ might lead them to the general formula for the sum of a geometric series. As they work to solve a problem, mathematically proficient students maintain oversight of the process, while attending to the details. They continually evaluate the reasonableness of their intermediate results.	

Blueprint

The AzMERIT blueprints detail specific information in regard to the domains tested at each grade level. The blueprint outlines the percentage of points aligned to each domain.

	Domain	Minimum	Maximum
Algebra 1	Algebra	40%	44%
Aigebia	Functions	36%	40%
	Statistics	17%	21%

Approximately 70% of the assessment for High School will be on major content.

	Domain	Minimum	Maximum
	Congruence	23%	27%
Geometry	Similarity, Right Triangles, And Trigonometry	27%	31%
deometry	Circles, Geometric Measurement and	23%	27%
	Dimensions	25%	2/70
	Modeling with Geometry	17%	21%

Approximately 70% of the assessment for High School will be on major content.

	Domain	Minimum	Maximum
Algebra 2	Algebra	34%	38%
Algebia 2	Functions	32%	36%
	Statistics	27%	31%

Approximately 70% of the assessment for High School will be on major content.

Depth of Knowledge (DOK)

DOK refers to the level of rigor or sophistication of the task in a given item, designed to reflect the complexity of the AzCCRS. Items at DOK level 1 focus on the recall of information, such as definitions, terms, and simple procedures. Items at DOK 2 require students to make decisions, solve problems, or recognize patterns; in general, they require a greater degree of engagement and cognitive processing than items at DOK 1. Items at DOK 3 feature higher-order cognitive tasks that assess students' capacities to approach abstract or complex problems.

Percentage of Points by Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level			
High School	DOK Level 1	DOK Level 2	DOK Level 3
riigii school	10% - 20%	60% - 70%	12% - 30%

For more information on DOK go to www.azed.gov/AzMERIT.

Calculators

Calculators are permitted for both the paper-based and computer-based assessment for High School Math.

Item Formats

The AzMERIT Assessments are composed of item formats that include traditional multiple-choice response items and technology-enhanced response items (TEI). TEIs are computer-delivered response items that require students to interact with test content to select, construct, and/or support their responses. TEIs are better able to assess a deeper level of understanding.

Currently, there are nine types of TEIs that may appear on the High School Math computer based assessment for AzMERIT:

- Editing Tasks (ET)
- Editing Task Choice (ETC)
- Equation Editor (EQ)
- Graphic Response Item Display (GRID)
- Hot Text (HT)
 - Selectable Hot Text
 - Drag-and-Drop Hot Text
- Matching Item (MI)
- Multi-Select (MS)
- Open Response
- Table Item (TI)

For paper based assessments (including those for students with an IEP or 504 plan that specifies a paper based accommodation), TEIs will be modified so that they can be scanned and scored electronically or hand-scored.

See the table below for a description of each TEI. In addition, for examples of each response item format described, see the AzMERIT Training Tests at http://azmeritportal.org/.

Item Format	Description	
Editing Task (ET)	The student clicks on a highlighted word or phrase that may be incorrect, which reveals a text box. The directions in the text box direct the student to replace the highlighted word or phrase with the correct word or phrase. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	
Editing Task Choice (ETC)	The student clicks a highlighted word or phrase, which reveals a drop-down menu containing options for correcting an error as well as the highlighted word or phrase as it is shown in the sentence to indicate that no correction is needed. The student then selects the correct word or phrase from the drop-down menu. For paper-based assessments, the item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. The student fills in a circle to indicate the correct word or phrase.	

Item Format	Description	
Equation Editor (EQ)	The student is presented with a toolbar that includes a variety of mathematical symbols that can be used to create a response. Responses may be in the form of a number, variable, expression, or equation, as appropriate to the test item. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with a modified version of the item that can be scanned and scored electronically or replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	
Graphic Response Item Display (GRID)	The student selects numbers, words, phrases, or images and uses the drag-and-drop feature to place them into a graphic. This item type may also require the student to use the point, line, or arrow tools to create a response on a graph. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	
Hot Text (HT)	Selectable Hot Text - Excerpted sentences from the text are presented in this item type. When the student hovers over certain words, phrases, or sentences, the options highlight. This indicates that the text is selectable ("hot"). The student can then click on an option to select it. For paper- based assessments, a "selectable" hot text item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. In this version, the student fills in a circle to indicate a selection.	
	Drag-and-Drop Hot Text - Certain numbers, words, phrases, or sentences may be designated "draggable" in this item type. When the student hovers over these areas, the text highlights. The student can then click on the option, hold down the mouse button, and drag it to a graphic or other format. For paper-based assessments, dragand-drop hot text items will be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	
Matching Item (MI)	The student checks a box to indicate if information from a column header matches information from a row. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	
Multi-Select (MS)	The student is directed to select all of the correct answers from among a number of options. These items are different from multiple-choice items, which allow the student to select only one correct answer. These items appear in the online and paper-based assessments.	
Open Response	The student uses the keyboard to enter a response into a text field. These items can usually be answered in a sentence or two. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	

Item Format	Description	
Table Item (TI)	The student types numeric values into a given table. The student may complete the entire table or portions of the table depending on what is being asked. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.	

Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (AzCCRS)

Number and Quantity

The Complex Number System (N-CN)

HS.N-CN.A – Perform arithmetic operations with complex numbers.

HS.N-CN.B – Represent complex numbers and their operations on the complex plane.

HS.N-CN.C – Use complex numbers in polynomial identities and equations.

Quantities (N-Q)

HS.N-Q.A – Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems.

The Real Number System (N-RN)

HS.N-RN.A – Extend the properties of exponents to rational exponents.

HS.N-RN.B – Use properties of rational and irrational numbers.

Vector & Matrix Quantities (N-VM)

HS.N-VM.A – Represent and model with vector quantities.

HS.N-VM.B – Perform operations on vectors.

HS.N-VM.C – Perform operations on matrices and use matrices in applications.

High School Math Item Specifications (Number and Quantity)

The Complex Number System

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-CN.A.1 Know there is a complex number i such that $i^2 = -1$, and every complex number has the form a + bi with a and b real.		
Explanations	None		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra II only. The exponent for i should be no greater than 2. The arithmetic performed under this standard should serve to clarify the form of a single complex number (differentiating between complex numbers that are real, complex numbers with imaginary and real components, and pure-imaginary numbers).		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is not allowed. Math Practices 2, 6		
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to match square roots of negative numbers with complex numbers.		Equation Response Multiple Choice Response Matching Item Response	2, 6
Students will be required to create equivalent numbers in standard a + bi form.			2, 6

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-CN.A.2 Use the relation $i^2 = -1$ and the commutative, associative, and distributive properties to add, subtract, and multiply complex numbers.		
Explanations	None		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra II only.		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed. Math Practices 2, 7		2,7
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to solve problems using algebraic properties (commutative, associative, and distributive) with multiple complex numbers.		Equation Response Multiple Choice Response	2,7

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-CN solutions.	.C.7 Solve quadratic equations with	real coefficients that have complex
Explanations	None		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra II only. Include real and complex solutions as options, but keys should be complex solutions Equation response items for this standard are not ideal, in that there is no "+-" button, and many solutions derived from the quadratic equation are cumbersome to input. Therefore, EQ items at this standard should ask for one solution, and that solution should be simple to input.		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed.	Math Practices	6, 8
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to solve a quadratic equation.		Equation Response Multiple Choice Response	6, 8

Quantities

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-Q.A.1 Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays.		
Explanations	This standard is aligned to Algebra I only. Include word problems where quantities are given in different units, which must be converted to make sense of the problem. Graphical representations and data displays include, but are not limited to: line graphs, circle graphs, histograms, multi-line graphs, scatterplots, and multi-bar graphs.		
Content Limits	Rational numbers Linear equations and graph Exponential equations and graphs Customary and metric units of measure		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed. Math Practices 4, 5, 6		4, 5, 6
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to solve problems that focus on an incorrect selection of units given the context.		Equation Response Multiple Choice Response	5, 6
Students will be required to identify/modify vertical and horizontal scales of a graph, including breaks, to fit a given situation.			4, 5, 6

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-Q./modeling.	A.2 Define appropriate quantities	for the purpose of descriptive
Explanations	None		
Content Limits	Algebra I: Linear and exponential models Algebra II: Quadratic and rational models		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed.	Math Practices	4, 6
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to use units appropriate to the context to solve problems.		Equation Response Multiple Choice Response	4, 6

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-Q./ measurement when reporting quan	A.3 Choose a level of accuracy tities.	appropriate to limitations on
Explanations	The margin of error and tolerance limit varies according to the measure, tool used, and context.		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra I only.		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed.	Math Practices	5, 6
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to explain, justify, and/or defend someone's level of accuracy needed to perform a given calculation between two quantities of different measurements.		Multiple Choice Response	5, 6

The Real Number System

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-RN.A.1 Explain how the definition of the meaning of rational exponents follows from extending the properties of integer exponents to those values, allowing for a notation for radicals in terms of rational exponents.		
Explanations	Students may explain orally or in written format.		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra II only. Rational exponents and bases		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed. Math Practices 2, 3		
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to identify correct notation for radicals.		Multiple Choice Response	2
Students will be required to explain the meaning of rational exponents. Context is required.			2, 3

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content.N-RN.A.2 Rewrite expressions involving radicals and rational exponents using the properties of exponents.		
Explanations	None		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra II only.		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed. Math Practices		
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to given an expression, create/identify an equivalent expression.		Equation ResponseMultiple Choice Response	7

Content Standards	AzCCRS.Math.Content. N-RN.B.3 Explain why the sum or product of two rational numbers is rational; that the sum of a rational number and an irrational number is irrational; and that the product of a nonzero rational number and an irrational number is irrational.		
Explanations	Since every difference is a sum and every quotient is a product, this includes differences and quotients as well. Explaining why the four operations on rational numbers produce rational numbers can be a review of students understanding of fractions and negative numbers. Explaining why the sum of a rational and an irrational number is irrational, or why the product is irrational, includes reasoning about the inverse relationship between addition and subtraction (or between multiplication and addition).		
Content Limits	This standard is aligned to Algebra I only. For products, can include [irrational number] x 0 as rational.		
Common Item Formats	The Item Formats section on pages 11 through 13 provides a list of item formats that may be used to assess this standard. The common item formats include but are not limited to those shown with the sample task demands.		
Context	Context is allowed. Math Practices 2, 3		
Sample Task Demands		Common Item Formats	Recommended Math Practices
Students will be required to given sums/products of numbers, identify which are rational and which are irrational.		Multiple Choice Response Multi-Select Response	2, 3
Students will be required to justify why the sums/products of two rational numbers, two irrational numbers, and one irrational and one rational numbers are necessarily rational or irrational.			2, 3